



Australian Bureau of Statistics

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population tops half a million: ABS

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population has reached 517,200 or 2.5% of the total Australian population.

These new figures which are preliminary estimates of the Indigenous population as at 30 June 2006, were released today by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).

The Indigenous population has continued to grow for the past 20 years, reflecting relatively high levels of fertility.

Of Australia's Indigenous people, 90% identify as being of Aboriginal origin, 6% of Torres Strait Islander origin and 4% as being of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin.

Over 60% of the total Torres Strait Islander population lived in Queensland.

New South Wales (148,200) and Queensland (146,400) had the largest Indigenous populations, followed by Western Australia (77,900) and the Northern Territory (66,600).

Indigenous people comprised 32% of the population of the Northern Territory.

According to the 2006 Census, there were large Indigenous populations in urban areas, notably Sydney (census count 41,800), Brisbane (41,400) and Perth (21,300).

The areas with high proportions of Indigenous people were in remote Australia and included the Torres Strait region in Queensland (83%), the Northern Territory regions of Apatula (surrounding Alice Springs) (79%) and Jabiru (extending from Kakadu to the Tiwi Islands) (77%).

Preliminary estimated resident population by Indigenous status, 2006(a)

State/Territory	Indigenous 2006	Non-Indigenous, 2006	Total, 2006	Indigenous as proportion of total Australian Indigenous population	Indigenous as proportion of state/territory population
	'000	'000	'000	%	%
NSW	148.2	6,669.0	6,817.2	28.7	2.2
Vic	30.8	5,097.5	5,128.3	6.0	0.6
Qld	146.4	3,945.1	4,091.5	28.3	3.6
SA	26.0	1,542.2	1,568.2	5.0	1.7
WA	77.9	1,981.1	2,059.0	15.1	3.8

Tas	16.9	473.0	489.9	3.3	3.4
NT	66.6	144.1	210.7	12.9	31.6
ACT	4.0	330.2	334.2	0.8	1.2
Australia (b)	517.2	20,184.3	20,701.5	100.0	2.5

a. Estimates are subject to revision once 2006 population estimates have been finalised and after analysis of the components of growth in the Indigenous population (demographic and non-demographic factors) between 2001 and 2006.

b. Includes Other Territories

Further details, including Census counts of the Indigenous population for small areas according to the Australian Indigenous Geographical Classification and summary discussions of data quality issues in measuring the Indigenous population, are available in *Population Distribution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2006* (cat. no. 4705.0)

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